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[DEC. 9, 1861.]

Zambesi from the Delta to the Batoka country. The plant is often very luxuriant, reaching 6 feet high in the Shiré valley near Lake Nyassa; at Tetté, on the stony ground near the town, it does not exceed 1 to 2 feet. Judging from small experiments made at Shupanga, where it is particularly abundant, the indigo produced from this species seems to be of good quality.

It is singular that the art of dyeing by means of it should be quite unknown among the natives, nor is it practised among the Portuguese.

Orchilla weed may be gathered from the bark of trees in the Delta near the coast, being frequent near the Luabo mouth.

Fustic.—A climbing shrub, a species of Maclurea with eatable fruit, exists in the Zambesi valley both above and below Kebrabassa. It seldom, however, attains a sufficient size to form much of the heart wood which contains the colouring matter. If this should be found in sufficient quantity, it would be of value, as the colour is permanent and good.

CEREALS.—There are many cereals now in use among the people: of these, Sorghum, Pennisetum, Eleusine, Setaria, maize, rice, and wheat are the principal; of these the last three are of most importance to Europeans. The Delta and Lower Shiré valley are the best rice grounds, while wheat requires a constant supply of moisture during the cold season. Thus, without irrigation (which has not been practised since the time of the Jesuits) it can only be grown in the damp hollows, which are under water part of the year; in such places it is raised in the Delta and near Tetté; but the Manganja highlands are the best suited for it, being cool and more abundantly watered than any other part.

3. *On the Batoka Country.* By Mr. CHARLES LIVINGSTONE. Dated
“Kongoni mouth of the Zambesi, Jan. 14, 1861.”

Read April 22, 1861.

THE country of the Batoka, in Central Africa, lies between the 25th and 29th degrees of east longitude and the 16th and 18th of south latitude. It has the river Kafué on the north, the Zambesi on the east and south, and extends west till it touches the low fever-plains of the river Majeela, near Sesheke.

A mountain range running N.E. and S.W. rises abruptly about 15 miles north of the Zambesi, and spreads north and west in a vast undulating table-land, 3000 to 5000 feet above the level of the sea, with extensive grassy plains, through which wind several perennial streams, as the Kalomo, Likone, Ungnesi, &c.

Between this elevated land and the Zambesi, as far west as Thabacheu, the Tetté sandstone is the prevailing rock, while limestone, beds of shale, and seams of coal crop out from the banks of some of the small streams which flow into the Zambesi. North and west of this, granite resembling the Aberdeen variety abounds, and especially so on the Kalomo; while near the Victoria Falls of Mosioatunya, basalt, of apparently recent origin, is the common rock. These broad, elevated lands have a fine healthy climate, well adapted to the European constitution. Fever is unknown. In winter the thermometer sinks during the night as low as 30° Fahr., when thin ice is formed, and during the day the temperature rises to about 68°.

But a few years since these extensive, healthy highlands were well peopled by the Batoka; numerous herds of cattle furnished abundance of milk, and the rich soil largely repaid the labour of the husbandman. Now enormous herds of buffaloes, elephants, antelopes, zebras, &c., fatten on the excellent pasture which formerly supported multitudes of cattle, and not a human being is to be seen. We travelled from Monday morning till late in the Saturday afternoon (from Thabacheu to within 20 miles of Mosioatunya) without

meeting a single person, though constantly passing the ruined sites of Batoka villages. These people were driven out of this, the choicest portion of their noble country, by the invasion of Sebituané. Many were killed, and the survivors, except those around the Falls, plundered of their cattle, fled to the banks of the Zambesi and to the rugged hills of Mataba. Scarcely, however, had the conquerors settled down to enjoy their ill-gotten riches when they themselves were attacked by small-pox ; and, as soon as its ravages had ceased, the fighting Matibélé compelled them to abandon the country, and seek refuge amidst the fever-swamps of Linyanti.

The Batoka have a mild and pleasant expression of countenance, and are easily distinguished from the other Africans by the singular fashion of wearing no upper front teeth, all persons of both sexes having them knocked out in early life. They seem never to have been a fighting race, but to have lived at peace among themselves, and on good terms with their neighbours. While passing through their country we observed one day a large cairn. Our guide favoured us with the following account of it :—“Once on a time the ancients were going to fight another tribe ; they halted here and sat down. After a long consultation they came to the unanimous conclusion that, instead of proceeding to fight and kill their neighbours, and perchance getting themselves killed, it would be more like men to raise this heap of stones as their earnest protest against what the other tribe had done, which they accordingly did, and then returned quietly home again.”

But, although the Batoka appear never to have had much stomach for fighting with men, they are remarkably brave hunters of buffaloes and elephants. They rush fearlessly close up to these formidable animals, and kill them with their heavy spears. The Banyai, who have long levied black-mail from all Portuguese traders, were amazed at the daring bravery of the Batoka in coming at once to close quarters with the elephant and despatching him. They had never seen the like before. Does it require one kind of bravery to fight with men, and another and different sort to fight with the fiercest animals ? It seems that men may have the one kind in an eminent degree, and yet be without the other.

The Batoka having lived at peace for ages, had evidently attained to a degree of civilization very much in advance of any other tribe we have yet discovered. They *planted* and *cultivated fruit-trees*. Nowhere else has this been the case, not even among the tribes which have been in contact with the Portuguese for two hundred years, and have seen and tasted mangoes, oranges, &c. &c. The natives round Senna and Tetté will on no account plant the stone of a mango. They are firm believers in a superstition that “if any one plants a mango, he will die soon afterwards.”

In and around the Batoka villages some of the most valuable timber-trees have been allowed to stand, but every worthless tree has been cut down and rooted out, and the best of the various fruit-trees of the country have been carefully planted and preserved, and also a few trees from whose seeds they extracted oil. We saw fruit-trees which had been planted in regular rows, the trunks being about 3 feet in diameter, and also grand old Motsakiri fruit-trees still bearing abundantly, which had certainly seen a hundred summers.

Two of the ancient Batoka once travelled as far as the river Loangwa. There they saw the massan-tree in fruit, carried some all the way back to the Great Falls, and planted them. Two of the trees are still standing, the only ones of the kind in all that region.

They made a near approach to the custom of even the most refined nations in having permanent graveyards, either on the sides of sacred hills, or under the shady fig-trees near the villages. They reverenced the tombs of their ancestors, and erected monuments of the costliest ivory at the head of the grave, and often even entirely enclosed it with the choicest ivory. Other tribes on the Zambesi throw the body into the river, to be devoured by alligators ;

or, sewing it in a mat, place it on the branches of the baobab, or cast it in some gloomy, solitary spot overgrown with thorns and noxious weeds, to be devoured by the foul hyena. But the Batoka reverently buried their dead, and regarded the ground as sacred to their memories. Near the confluence of the Kafué, the chief, accompanied by some of his head men, came to our sleeping-place with a present; their foreheads were marked with white flour, and there was an unusual seriousness in their demeanour.

We were informed that shortly before our arrival they had been accused of witchcraft. Conscious of innocence they accepted the terrible ordeal, or offered to drink the poisoned muavi. For this purpose they made a journey to the sacred hill where reposed the bodies of their ancestors, and, after a solemn appeal to the unseen spirits of their fathers to judge of the innocence of these their children, drank the muavi, vomited, and were therefore declared to be "Not guilty." They believed in the immortality of the soul, and that the souls of their ancestors knew what they were doing, and were pleased or not accordingly. The owners of a large canoe refused to sell it because it belonged to the spirits of their fathers, who helped them in killing the hippopotamus.

Some of the Batoka chiefs must have had a good deal of enterprise. The lands of one in the western part of the country lay on the Zambezi, which protected him on the south; on the east and north was an impassable reedy marsh, filled with water all the year round, leaving only his west border unprotected and open to invasion. He conceived the bold project of digging a broad and deep canal, nearly a mile in length, from the west end of the reedy river to the Zambezi, and actually carried it into execution; thus forming a large island, on which his cattle grazed in safety, and his corn ripened from year to year secure from all marauders.

Another chief, who died a number of years ago, believed that he had discovered a remedy for tsetse bitten cattle. His son showed us the plant, which was new to our botanist, and likewise told us how the medicine was prepared. The bark of the root is dried, and—what will be specially palatable to our homœopathist friends—a dozen tsetse are caught, dried, and ground with the bark to a fine powder. The mixture is administered internally, and the cattle are also smoked, by burning the rest of the plant under them. The treatment is continued some weeks, as often as symptoms of the poison show themselves. This, he frankly said, will not cure all the bitten cattle, for cattle, and men too, die in spite of medicine; but should a herd by accident stray into a tsetse district and get bitten, by this medicine of Kampakampa, his father, some of them could be saved, while without it all would be sure to die.

A remarkably prominent feature in the Batoka character is their enlarged hospitality. No stranger is ever allowed to suffer hunger. They invariably sent to our sleeping-places large presents of the finest white meal, with fat capons "to give it a relish," and great pots of beer to comfort our hearts, with pumpkins, beans, and tobacco; so that, as they said, we "should not sleep hungry nor thirsty."

In travelling from the Kafué to Sinamanes, we often passed several villages in the course of a day's march. In the evening, deputations arrived from those villages at which we could not sleep, with liberal presents of food. It evidently pained them to have strangers pass without partaking of their hospitality. Repeatedly were we hailed from huts, asked to wait a moment and drink a little beer, which they brought with alacrity.

When we halted for the night, it was no uncommon thing for these people to prepare our camp. Entirely of their own accord, some with their hoes quickly smoothed the ground for our beds; others brought bundles of grass and spread it carefully over the spot; some with their small axes speedily made a brush-fence round to shield us from the wind; and if, as occasionally happened, the water was a little distant, others hastened and brought a pot or two of water to cook our food with, and also firewood. They are an industrious people, and very

fond of agriculture. For hours at a time have we marched through unbroken corn-fields of nearly a mile in width. They erect numerous granaries for the reception of the grain, which give their villages the appearance of being unusually large; and when the water of the Zambesi has subsided they place the grain, tied up in bundles of grass, well plastered over with clay, on low sand islands, as a protection against the attacks of marauding mice and men.

Owing to the ravages of the weevil, the native corn can hardly be preserved until the following crop comes in. However largely they may cultivate, and abundant the harvest, it must all be consumed the same year in which it is grown. This may account for their making so much of it into beer. The beer they brew is not the sour and intoxicating kind found among other tribes, but sweet, and highly nutritious, with only a slight degree of acidity to render it a pleasant drink. We never saw a single case of intoxication among them, though all drank great quantities of beer. They were all plump, and in good condition.

Both men and boys were eager to work for very small pay. Our men could hire any number of them to carry their burdens for a few beads a-day or a bit of cloth. The miserly and extra-dirty cook had an old pair of trowsers some of us had given him, and which he had long worn himself: with one of the decayed legs of his trowsers he hired a man to carry his heavy load a whole day; a second man carried it the next day for the other leg; and what remained of the old trowsers, minus the buttons, procured the labour of another man for the third day.

They have their wandering minstrels. One of these, apparently a genuine poet, attached himself to our company for several days, and, whenever we halted, sang our praise to the villagers, in harmonious numbers of 4 and 5 feet respectively. Another, though less gifted son of song, belonged to the Batoka of our own party. Every evening, while the others were talking or sleeping, he played on his sansah and rehearsed his songs. In composing extempore he was never at a loss: if the words refused to come, he halted not, but eked out the measure with a h—m, h—m, h—m. We did not observe many musical instruments among them: perhaps since their exile from the finest portion of their country, like the Jewish captives by the rivers of Babylon, they have hung their harps upon the willows.

A peculiar order of men is established among them, the order of the Endah Pézés (Go-Naked). The badge of this order, as the name suggests, consists in the entire absence of the slightest shred of clothing. They are in the state in which Adam is reported to have been before his invention of the fig-leaf apparel. We began to see members of this order about two days above the junction of the Kafué; two or three might be seen in a village. The numbers steadily increased, until in a short time every man and boy wore the badge of the Endah Pézés. The chief of one of the first villages, a noble, generous fellow, was one, as were likewise two or three of his men. In the afternoon he visited us in the full dress of his order, viz., a tobacco-pipe, nothing else whatever, the stem about 2 feet long, wound round with polished iron. He gave us a liberal present. Early next morning he came, accompanied by his wife and daughter, with two large pots of beer, in order that we might refresh ourselves before starting. Both the women, as comely and modest-looking as we have seen in Africa, were well clothed and adorned.

The women, in fact, are all well clothed, and have many ornaments. Some wear tin ear-rings all round the ear, no fewer than nine often in each ear. There was nothing to indicate that they had the slightest idea of there being anything peculiar in the no-dress-at-all style of their order. They rub their bodies with red ochre. Some plait a fillet two inches wide, of the inner bark of trees, shave the wool off the lower part of the head to an inch above the ears, tie this fillet on, having rubbed it and the wool which is left with the red ochre mixed in oil. It gives them the appearance of having on a neat forage-

cap. This, with some strings of beads, a little polished iron wire round the arms, the never-failing pipe, and a small pair of iron tongs to lift up a coal to light it with, constitute all the clothing the most dandyfied Endah Pézé ever wears.

They raise immense quantities of tobacco on the banks of the Zambesi in the winter months, and are, perhaps, the most inveterate smokers in the world. The pipe is seldom out of their hands. They are as polite smokers as any ever found in a railway carriage. When they came with a present, although it was their own country, before lighting their pipes they asked if we had any objections to their smoking beside us, which of course, contrary to railway travellers, we never had. They have invented a novel mode of smoking, which may interest those who are fond of the weed at home. They take a whiff, puff out the grosser smoke, then by a sudden inhalation before all is out contrive to catch, as they say, and swallow the pure spirit of the tobacco, its real essence, which common smokers lose entirely. Their tobacco is said to be very strong; it is certainly very cheap; a few strings of beads will purchase as much as will last any reasonable smoker half a year. Their government, whatever it may have been formerly, is now that of separate and independent chiefs. The language is a dialect of that which is spoken by the natives on the Zambesi below them, and particularly marked by the characteristic use of the letter *r*, to the apparently total exclusion of the letter *l*. They have not been visited by any regular trader for many a day until shortly after we passed. A party of trading slaves, belonging to the two half-caste Portuguese who last year, with 400 slaves armed with the old Sepoy flint muskets, so treacherously assassinated the chief and 20 of his men near Zumba, and then took possession of all his lands on the Zambesi and Loangwa, followed in our spoor, and bought large quantities of ivory and a number of young slave-girls for a few beads. They also purchased 10 large new canoes for 6 strings of coarse white or red beads a-piece, or 2 fathoms of American calico. As traders are now sure to go to them with beads and cloth, the order of the Endah Pézés will in a short time be numbered among the things that were; for it is to be regretted that these traders belong to a nation whose subjects buy and sell slaves, and are the guilty agents for carrying on the slave-trade in all this part of Eastern Africa.

4. The River Rovuma. Extract from "Pilotage remarks" of D. J. MAY, R.N., in charge of the *Pioneer*, Dr. Livingstone's Expedition.

THE river Rovuma is about 12 miles north-westward of Cape Delgado, in lat. 10° 28' s., long. 40° 30' e.; the entrance is 1 mile in breadth, situated on the south side of a bay 6 miles in length and 3 in breadth, formed by Rovuma Point on the south, and the island of Nizambarry on the north.

In rounding Rovuma Point, the entrance of the river is not easily made out until it bears s.w. (there being many other smaller openings to the north and south of it), on which bearing a vessel may anchor in 5 or 7 fathoms. During the time the *Pioneer* was here she anchored for a fortnight off the entrance, when the ebb-tide made out of the river the whole time, overcoming the flood-tide, which in springs rises to 18 feet, and in neaps to 5 feet.

The navigable entrance to the river is only $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile, owing to projecting sand-banks on both sides; and, although there is no bar, it is dangerous for boats to attempt the entrance between half-flood and half-ebb, on account of the over-falls caused by the sudden change in the depth from 3 to 17 fathoms.

About 2 miles inside the entrance commence a series of sand-banks, which obstruct the channel, rendering the navigation very intricate, by a narrow passage which runs from one side of the river abruptly to the other, with a depth of only 5 or 6 feet in many places.